



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Tony Evers, Governor | Mary M. Kolar, Secretary

June 5, 2020

Dear Members and Families:

Greetings! I would like to share with you where we are regarding testing all members and staff for COVID-19. As you are aware, a few weeks ago we began testing everyone at our Home as part of the overall effort throughout the state to identify all cases of COVID-19 in nursing homes and enable us to take appropriate action.

We completed testing for members last week and have received the test results. We are very happy to report that **every member has tested negative for COVID-19**; this is such good news!

We continue to test and receive results for staff. Unfortunately, another staff member has tested positive. This individual was asymptomatic while at work and we are grateful to know that this individual has remained asymptomatic while restricted at home. This is the second staff member to test positive at Union Grove (the first we reported to you on 5/24/20).

The individuals who live here, due to their age and underlying conditions, are very vulnerable to this virus. We have been largely successful in keeping COVID-19 out of our Home because of the diligence of our outstanding staff, as well as the protocols we have in place to help prevent spread. Our staff are truly heroes and I thank them for all they are doing in the face of this challenge.

While we are proud of our good news, we cannot let our foot off the gas. I understand that this situation is hard on all of us, we all want things to go back to normal so we can spend time with our family and friends; but we are not in the clear.

Today, Racine County has the highest rate of positive COVID-19 cases in the state. Kenosha County's rate of positive cases is nearly as high; COVID-19 is just outside our doors.

I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to continue to exercise caution – wear masks, practice social distancing – when you are out in the community. You can be asymptomatic and still have COVID-19. Our staff who live in these communities must still safely navigate their daily lives while not here so that we can continue to keep all members free of this virus.

While we will maintain the policies and continue with protocols that have brought us to this point, please know we are actively preparing for the day when it is safe to loosen our visitor policy. We are working with other experts in the long-term care industry to determine the right time to allow for visitors and how we can continue to keep people healthy once we loosen our policy. We understand that interacting with loved ones plays an important role in the overall health of an individual and we are committed to finding safe ways for us all to be together again.

Thank you again for all your support and understanding as we do all we can to keep our members and staff happy, healthy, and safe.

I am happy to answer any questions you have; you may reach me at 608-294-7807.

Diane Lynch
Homes Division Administrator